with the aid of power, 50 or more workers, or for manufacturing without aid of the power, 100 or more workers, are working or were working on any day during the preceding 12 months. No case of manufacture of cigarettes in violation of the provisions of the aforesaid Act has come to the notice of the Government. Bidi is not a scheduled industry under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951 and, therefore, the provisions relating to licensing under the said Act are not applicable.

Export Credit Guarantee Corporation

1009. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to raise the capital of Export Credit Guarantee Corporation (ECGC) from Rs. 500 crore to Rs. 800 crore; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) Government have already decided to raise the capital base of Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India Ltd. (ECGC) from Rs. 500 crore to Rs. 800 crore over the Tenth Five Year Plan period. Out of Rs. 300 crore, Rs. 100 crore have been approved for release during the current financial year.

Export target

1010. SHRI S. M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have export target of US $ 150 billion for the financial year 2009-10;

(b) if so, the basis of this export target set by Government;

(c) whether Government have made any plans for increasing rice exports during the next five years;

(d) whether any specific plan has been drawn up for agricultural exports; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) An export target of 16 per cent corresponding to a level of US $ 73.4 billion has been fixed for the year 2004-05 which is higher than the target of 12 per cent fixed for the last two years. This will help exports to reach a level of US $ 150 billion in 2009-10. The recent export performance, global economic environment and the views of the exporting community were taken into account while fixing the export target.

(c) Government has taken several steps to boost export of rice such as publicity campaigns, sending delegations abroad, participating in international trade fairs, providing financial assistance to exporters for improving quality, packaging and brand promotion etc. A new foodgrains export policy is also being formulated. Besides, APEDA has undertaken steps like registration of Basmati rice as geographical indication, market study for promotion in emerging markets etc.

(d) and (e) In order to ensure growth of exports of agricultural products, the Government provides a variety of incentives in the form of financial and other assistance through APEDA/Commodity Boards/Councils. In the Foreign Trade Policy 2004-09, the Government has identified certain special focus initiatives for boosting agricultural exports which include: Vishesh Krishi Upaj Yojana for promoting the export of fruits, vegetables, flowers and their value added products; funds under ASIDE for development of Agri Export Zones (AEZs); duty free imports of capital goods under EPCG Scheme; exemption from bank guarantee under EPCG Scheme for units in AEZ etc.

Rise in exports

1011. SHRI S. M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that exports have crossed US dollar 40 billion during the period from April 1 to October 30,2004;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the growth of exports during this seven month period increased nearly 27 per cent over the same period last year;